

IN THE CLAIMS

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein each of said groups of modified nucleotides consists of one to ten nucleotides ~~and wherein each of said groups of flanking nucleotides consists of one to ten nucleotides.~~

13. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein the pattern of modified nucleotides of said first stretch is the same as the pattern of modified nucleotides of said second stretch.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein the pattern of modification of said first stretch is shifted by one or more nucleotides relative to the pattern of modification of the second stretch.

16. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein said modification is selected from the group consisting of amino, fluoro, ~~methoxy~~ O-methyl, ~~alkoxy~~ O-alkyl and alkyl modifications.

17. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein said double stranded structure is blunt ended at both ends.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) The ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44, wherein the complementarity between said first ~~strand~~ stretch and the target nucleic acid is perfect.

20-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently amended) A cell comprising a ribonucleic acid according to claim ~~11~~ 44.

32. (Original) An organism comprising a cell according to claim 31.

33. (Canceled)

34. (New) A double stranded ribonucleic acid molecule, wherein the first strand of said molecules is complementary to a target nucleic acid,

wherein the second strand is complementary to said first strand,

wherein each strand comprises a stretch of alternating single 2'-modified and unmodified nucleotides

wherein said 2'-modified and unmodified nucleotides in said stretch are linked by phosphodiester bonds, and

wherein each stretch comprises 15 or more nucleotides.

35. (New) The molecule according to claim 34, wherein each modified nucleotide on said first stretch is complementary to an unmodified nucleotide on said second stretch.

36. (New) The molecule according to claim 34, wherein said RNA molecule is blunt ended at one or both ends.

37. (New) The molecule according to claim 36, wherein said RNA molecule is blunt ended at both ends.

38. (New) The ribonucleic acid molecule according to claim 34, wherein each stretch is 18-23 base pairs long.

39. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 34, wherein each 2' modified nucleotide in said stretch has a 2' modification selected from the group consisting of amino, fluoro, O-methyl, O-alkyl and alkyl modifications.

40. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 39, wherein each modified nucleotide is a 2'-O-methyl modified nucleotide.

41. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ribonucleic acid according to claim 34 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

42. (New) A cell comprising a ribonucleic acid according to claim 34.

43. (New) An organism comprising a cell according to claim 42.

44. (New) A ribonucleic acid molecule comprising a double stranded structure having a first and second strand,

wherein the first strand comprises a first stretch of contiguous nucleotides that is at least partially complementary to a target nucleic acid,

wherein the second strand comprises a second stretch of contiguous nucleotides that is at least partially identical to a target nucleic acid,

wherein said first and second stretch each are 15-23 nucleotides long and each stretch consists of an alternating pattern of a plurality of groups of 2'-modified nucleotides wherein each group is linked by a single unmodified nucleotide.

45. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44,
wherein each group of modified nucleotides consists of a single nucleotide.

46. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 45,
wherein each modified nucleotide of said first stretch is complementary to an unmodified
nucleotide of said second stretch.

47. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44, wherein each of said modified
nucleotides is a 2'-O-methyl modified nucleotide.

48. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44, wherein said double stranded
structure is blunt ended at one or both ends.

49. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44, wherein the nucleotides of said
first stretch are linked by phosphodiester bonds and wherein the nucleotides of said second
stretch are linked by phosphodiester bonds.

50. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44 wherein the length of the double-
stranded structure is from about 17 to 23 bases.

51. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44 wherein the first nucleotide of said
first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said first nucleotide of said stretch is the first
nucleotide of said first strand.

52. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 44 wherein the last nucleotide of said
first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said last nucleotide of said stretch is the last
nucleotide of said first strand.

53. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 51 wherein the last nucleotide of said
first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said last nucleotide of said stretch is the last
nucleotide of said first strand.

54. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 53 wherein the length of the double-
stranded structure is from about 17 to 23 bases.

55. (New) A ribonucleic acid molecule comprising a double stranded structure having a
first and second strand,

wherein the first strand comprises a first stretch of contiguous nucleotides that is at least
partially complementary to a target nucleic acid,

wherein the second strand comprises a second stretch of contiguous nucleotides that is at
least partially identical to a target nucleic acid,

wherein said first and second stretch each comprise the pattern of modification MOMOMOMOM wherein M is a 2'-modified nucleotide and O is a non-modified nucleotide, and wherein a modified nucleotide on one strand is complementary to a non-modified nucleotide on the other strand.

56. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55, wherein each of said modified nucleotides is a 2'-O-methyl modified nucleotide.

57. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55, wherein said double stranded structure is blunt ended at one or both ends.

58. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55, wherein the nucleotides of said first stretch are linked by phosphodiester bonds and wherein the nucleotides of said second stretch are linked by phosphodiester bonds.

59. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55 wherein the length of the double-stranded structure is from about 17 to 23 bases.

60. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55 wherein the first nucleotide of said first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said first nucleotide of said stretch is the first nucleotide of said first strand.

61. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 55 wherein the last nucleotide of said first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said last nucleotide of said stretch is the last nucleotide of said first strand.

62. (New) The ribonucleic acid according to claim 60 wherein the last nucleotide of said first stretch is a 2'-modified nucleotide and wherein said last nucleotide of said stretch is the last nucleotide of said first strand.